faces and flowing hair, fair until they had enticed young men into the treasure dens when they would suddenly turn into old women. There were also *ta-says* who haunted human beings, *son-ma* witches who disguised themselves until they were ready to eat you, and *belus*, ogres which thrived on human beings. Far from the careful nurturing which is given to modern children of the West in attempts to prevent fears of the dark and loneliness, in Thanatpin I could have pointed out the actual tree in which the old witch lived, and when it grew dark both my nurse and I would shiver together in each other's arms at the thought of it.

Nor were the funny stories of the right type for Western children, though they made us roar with delight. There were two brothers who wanted to make their grandmother beautiful, and bathed her in the hottest water they could produce; the water was boiling and the grandmother emerged clean and fair and rigid, and the two grandsons dressed her up and propped her in the doorway for all to admire. There was also the monkey who from his perch in a tree above the bazaar shouted: "Whoever eats of the fruit of this tree will have fragrant gases in his body." One poor human fool believed him, and ate, and went around hawking his ware of fragrant gases. He came to the court of the king, who caused seven layers of curtains to shroud the chamber for fear any of the fragrance would be lost when the experiment was carried out. We laughed to tears at the account of the poor fool's discomfiture.

When we were to be given any medicines or had any pain, however, both my father and mother waited on us. We did not use Western medicines in the house. We always had stocks of various kinds of *yet-sa*, a linctus powder with digestive qualities containing liquorice and herbs in a salt base. The taste is pleasant to all Burmese people who eat it at the slightest provocation; excess of it causes no harm. There is a popular brand on the market called *lay-myo shit-sè*, 80 kinds of wind, but in addition to this, each family gets a specially prepared type from their family monk. My father, who was interested in herbal medicine, collected recipes and my mother compounded them at home. We ate yet-sa whenever we had a slight stomach ache or when my mother considered that the food had been too rich. For a general tonic my father got from the monk a honey mixture with special powers, partly owing to the holiness of the monk, and we ate a tiny spoonful of this each night after prayers. For coughs and sore throats we had pills, called *hpongyi-bo-sha-na*, from Moulmein. They were made of pepper, capsicum, liquorice and salt, and acted by stimulating the salivary and throat juices. All these medicines had a pleasant taste and we liked eating them, but when we had a fever we were given *ngan-say*, a black powder of herbs and salt, which was mixed with hot water and

•757 given to us in saucers, my mother invoking the Triple Gems while blowing on it and coaxing us to drink it as the medicine of the Three Gems: "*Paya-say, taya-say, thanga-say,*" she would say: "Physic of the Buddha, of the Law, of the Clergy." After this came two saucersful of hot water in which betel leaves had been boiled, to raise a sweat; my mother would cover us with an ok-saung, my father would come in on tiptoe to look at us very often, even when our temperatures were nearly normal, and the fever would leave us quite soon.

Our purgative was *dat-le-ba-say*, physic of the four elements; it was a glutinous paste of senna for purging, tamarind as acid and purgative, jaggery to soothe, liquorice to taste, and salt. It was nasty. My mother rolled about a golf ball size of the stuff into little balls which we were expected to swallow. But she was very firm that there must always be an odd number of balls, because Burmese people believe that odd numbers are more auspicious, like the *Three* Gems, the *Nine* Nawaya; when the shinbyu ceremony for the initiation of boys into the priesthood is carried out, or the ears of the girls bored ceremonially, it is inauspicious to "do" an even number of children. So if my mother's golf ball of the purgative made eight balls, she would always pinch more stuff out of the jar and make nine, and, as I grew older and more sceptical, both my stomach and my mood would react on each other and I generally got stuck at the sixth or eighth, much to my mother's dismay. But to this day I believe in the efficacy of these particular medicines for my own system.

753 787 When any of us kept ailing over a long period it was felt that our astronomical prospects were low, and the *bedin-saya*, vulgarly translated as fortune-teller, was called in. He was regarded as an astrologer. My mother brought out our horoscopes which had been cast by a brahmin when we were a few years old. These horoscopes, inscribed on a palm leaf doubled up and sewn tightly together, were precious objects kept at the head of my father's bed. The exact day and hour of the birth of the child, the auspicious name given according to this time and day, the astronomical bodies exerting influence over such a birth, and a table to show the heavenly influences which would prevail during the successive periods of the child's life so that future calculations could be made, were all inscribed finely on this neat yellow leaf. The bedin-saya made calculations now to see if our *kan* (fate, luck) was high or low; if low, he prescribed some counteracting influences. I was once given a chicken as a *khamè*, a charm which would keep the evil influences at bay, and the servants fed the chicken for me until I had recovered. Sometimes it is certain foods which bring the evil influences, and the proscribing of them even during good health was more annoying. One of my sisters, treated thus as a child, complained that the bedin-saya was a tiresome

suffered from the accumulated toxic effects. Kyi-Kyi also spent days 262
in extracting the red oil from the heads of about fifty crayfish or big prawns. This red stuff gives the flavouring to prawns and we therefore find prawn curries tasteless where the cooks discard the oil with the teeth and other excretions from the heads. Kyi-Kyi filled jars with the rich oil and we kept it through weeks, mixing it with rice and salt. Or she bought about two hundred sparrows at one go and stripped and cooked them unaided. It does not sound sporting to eat sparrows, but the meat of other bigger and more "game" birds is too strong for us. Sparrows when fried crisp are edible to the last shred of bone, little round head and all. It was one of our favourite foods during visits to Thaton, until [157] •
after my littlest sister got measles and had her head shaved according to custom; when she went about looking so pathetically like the naked birds in the dish that none of us, from my father downwards, could bear to eat a sparrow for a long time afterwards.

All the dishes mentioned above are eaten with rice at the two main meals of the day, but there are also noodle dishes, both wheat and rice noodles, coconut-flavoured dishes and others which are eaten at luncheon parties or at mass gatherings of town and village people. At all social functions, also, there is an accompaniment to the cheroots and the betel box [276]
in the form of pickled tea-leaf and shredded pickled ginger served in small lacquer trays with nuts, sesamum, prawn powder, fried coconut and garlic These are all foods eaten at regular times of the day, and as such can be called *sa-sa-ya* foods. But we have not yet ventured into the realm of sweet things, for after a meal only fruit is eaten. All sweet dishes are kept to be eaten *between* meals, and as such are called *tha-yay-sa*, food for the saliva, and only incidentally for nourishment.

Tha-yay-sa usually means something sweet because there are so many sweet ones, but what does produce more saliva than any other are the sour ones. A favourite Burmese afternoon pastime is the eating of sour and green fruit with ngapi and chilly, in order to offset the drowsiness of the heat. Green mangoes, marians, chep-paung-thi, *yay-ngan-thi*, gwe-thi, *thit-to-thi* range through all degrees of sourness till you come to *tan-kyin-thi*, shiver-sour-fruit, so sour that you shiver when you bite it. On rainy afternoons we felt too chilly to eat these and nibbled at things with a nutty flavour. Roots, tubers, seeds and nuts are eaten dipped in raw sesamum oil and salt—the roots of the palmyra, and of a bean (*pè-myit*), arrowroot and sweet potatoes, chestnuts and the boiled seeds of the jack tree. But when we come to the real sweetmeats, what richness, what variety is there! As exiles of the Japanese War, we collect in parties to eat uninteresting and foreign foods, but after the meal we gather round and add flavour to the whole evening as we list all the

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

846 757 she is made to smell samôn-net, a plant (the *Nigella sativa*), which is put in an earthen pot, strongly heated, and then triturated into the shape of a ball. The odour is not exactly such as one would recognise as calculated to exhilarate any one, but probably after the hot bricks and the se sein everything else comes as a matter of detail. All this is done to drive out the noxious humours which are supposed to be generated by the birth of a child. On the seventh day the woman takes an elementary kind of Turkish bath. She sits over a large jar of boiling water, medicated with tamarind twigs and a few other kinds of leaves and grasses, with a blanket over her. After about an hour of this she has a cold bath, and is then free to do as she pleases. She usually goes to bed.

165 846 177·84 184 It might be supposed that under this treatment death in child-bearing would be very frequent, but as far as imperfect statistics can show the percentage is not much higher than in other countries. The result, however, appears in another way. A woman ages up ten or fifteen years for every child she has. It is satisfactory to notice that in all the larger towns in Lower Burma the more unpleasant features are fading away before the example and influence of women of other nationalities. In the jungle and in Upper Burma, however, ancient use and wont still prevail, and the young mother of fourteen or fifteen is shrivelled into thirty with her first baby.

845 If a woman gives birth to a still-born child, a piece of iron is placed in the cloth in which the body is wrapped, or in the coffin if there is one, and at the burial some member of the family says some such formula as "Never more return into thy mother's womb till this metal becomes soft as down."

[775] If a married woman dies before bearing a child (alôn hnin the-thi), a Cæsarean operation is performed, and the alôn is buried in some secret place. The reason alleged for this is, that were it not done, the husband in future existences would marry this woman again, and she would die in the same way. 845 754 Were the embryo not secretly buried it would be disinterred by hmaw-sayās, necromancers, and wizards, who would make evil uses of it. Children's cauls are as highly thought of by Burmans as they are by English

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

obtained. Red and yellow are, however, always the predominating colours. 531 285 322

The thi'si is turned to a variety of other uses besides the manufacture of lacquer-work; applied to wood, or to marble and clay images, it enables them readily to take on gilding. It is used as a waterproof varnish to all the umbrellas in the country, and makes them as impervious to rain as if they were made of wood, while it protects the palm-leaf against the rays of the sun, which otherwise would burn it as brittle as an egg-shell. All the racing and war-boats in Burma are painted with it, and the best caulking in the world could not make them more water-tight. Finally, boiled down thick it furnishes the material for delineating the square heavy characters of the sacred kammawa-sa, the ritual for the admission of brethren to the sacred order. 531 249

The oil is usually put in the sun for a short time before being used, and it is at first of a light brown colour, soon darkening into a brilliant black. It seems to be of a particularly mordant character, and raises huge blisters on the hands of some people, leaving marks of the ashy-white colour suggestive of leprosy. Hence strangers suspected of [753] being afflicted with the terrible malady always declare they are thi'si workers; and many people avoid these latter, in case they might find they had been holding communication with an outcast. A lotion composed of fine teak-wood saw-dust, mixed with a little water, is used as a cure for blains. [757] Many of the workmen periodically swallow small doses of the wood-oil, under the impression that it acts as a preventive. The capriciousness with which the varnish acts, leaving some men quite unharmed and punishing others severely, has given rise to a proverb in Nyaung-u:—

Thi'si is a witness
To a burgher's fitness;
If bad, he's marked an outcast;
If good, not long can doubt last.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

774 827 blood is feverish or excited in any way, the butterfly necessarily becomes restless, and wanders about more or less rapidly and into more or less strange places, according to the degree of perturbation. Therefore it happens that the soul thus existing in itself, and straying or flying at random, sees extremely strange and fantastic visions on these voyages. An elaboration of this notion divides dreams into three special varieties: those which occur at the beginning of sleep, those about midnight, and those in the early morning; or the false, the mixed, and the true. Bedin-sayās and wise women are for this reason always very particular in their inquiries as to the precise time at which the dream occurred. If they foretell wrongly it is, of course, because the questionist made a mistake as to the time when his vision appeared to him.

774 776 These night wanderings of the butterfly spirit are not without their dangers. In addition to other hobgoblins and spectres, Burma is especially plagued by evil spirits called bilus—creatures in human guise who devour men. If they will eat the corporate man, there is small doubt what will happen to the fragile butterfly spirit should it come across such an ogre. Cases do happen when the leip-bya is gulped down, and then the man has slept his last sleep. More often, however, it is only a case of leip-bya lan; the soul is scared, and in its terror sometimes runs into unknown regions, from which it is unable to retrace its steps, when of course it dies and with it the owner; or it rushes home to its bodily dwelling-place with such precipitation that the whole system is disorganised and sickness follows. This butterfly theory, therefore, offers a grand field for quack doctors, of whom there are unfortunately a very large number in Burma. When a man falls ill they dose him with all the drugs and simples they have in their little bamboo phials. If he does not get better after taking even the fungus from the roots of the bamboo, culled in the eclipse, or vegetable soot prepared at the change of the moon, then there can be only one opinion; the leip-bya has had its system shaken by some ghoulish sight; or perhaps it is being kept in durance vile by some tasé, some demon (in the sense of the Greek *δαίμων*), or by a sôn, a wizard. In this case no bodily medicine can be of any use, were it even that celebrated

753 757

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

753
757
757

nostrum, the green powder, which contains 160 different ingredients. A witch doctor must be called in, and he resorts to the leip-bya hkaw. This ceremony is very much like that made use of in ordinary cases of oppression by evil genii, nat-sos, and witches. Offerings are laid outside the house, or perhaps outside the village, at night—heaps of cooked rice, bananas, salt fish, and other eatables; and the malevolent being, whether ghostly tasé or material witch, is begged to eat this rice instead of the butterfly spirit, and to let the prisoner free. Few are hardy enough to watch and see what happens; but the few who have done so agree in the discovery that the demon appears in the shape of a pariah dog, which does not differ from other pariah dogs in spirit, inasmuch as it will run away if you throw stones at it. The offerings are repeated till a change takes place. Perhaps the tasé is greedy, eats offerings, leip-bya, and all, and kills the man. Perhaps it is appeased. Then the butterfly spirit returns safe to its owner again, and convalescence sets in. This is called leip-bya win. Bilus are never successfully negotiated with in this way; they are too voracious. They occasionally appear in broad daylight upon earth; but may always be recognised, since they have red eyes and cast no shadow.

774

A particularly difficult operation is to separate two leip-byas that were intimately united in life. This is especially the case when a mother has died leaving a little infant. If the leip-bya kwè is not resorted to, the butterfly of the little one will follow the mother, and the child will die. A wise woman is therefore called in. She murmurs some mantras, and then places a looking-glass on the floor near the corpse. Still muttering, but with more and more rapid gesticulation, she drops a filmy shred of cotton down on the face of the mirror, and with frenzied words entreats the dead mother not to retain the infant soul, but let it come back to its earthly tenement. The fleecy down slowly slips down the mirror face and falls off into the handkerchief she holds below, and is then gently placed on the breast of the child. A similar ceremony is occasionally gone through when a husband or wife is more than usually overcome by the death of the yoke-fellow.

The whole notion is of course foreign to Buddhism, and

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

—no doubt owing to the diversion of mind produced by banging away on the top of your roof, and the confidence and hope which the operation induces. Moreover, so much damage is done to the house itself that repairs take some time, which also serves to keep the mind occupied.

When the thayè tôpthi is over, the people return to their houses, where the pots with their consecrated contents are. The yellow string is unwound from the sticks and divided into lengths. Some people hang it all round the eaves of the house in little bags, others tie pieces of it round the left wrist, more especially those who go about much. At a time when there is cholera about, most of the young men may be seen with these wristlets. A Rangoon clerk detected wearing one colours with annoyance, and says his parents made him put it on. He very probably throws it away, but the same night he will have a fresh piece on. The thread is coloured with dye obtained from the wood of the jack-tree, the same which supplies the colouring matter for the monkish garments. The thabye bin leaves are kept in the pot, or scattered about the house. The tree is particularly highly esteemed by the Burmese. A species of it, the thabu thabye bin (the Malay apple, *Eugenia malaccensis*), is celebrated as the largest tree in the island which lies to the south of Mount Myinmo. Sprigs and leaves of the thabye bin are cut, prayers and supplications for absent friends and relatives offered up before them, and then the twig is thrown into a pot of water. A song has been composed about the tree itself, and is one of the most popular of those that do not belong to the category of love-songs. The jester in a play has always an unfailing draw when, wishing to testify his regard for some one, he declares he has cut down an entire thabye bin and thrown it into the river that his friend may enjoy good health. The joke lies in the contrast between this and the couple of leaves in a small pot used by people ordinarily.

It might have been expected that contact with English civilisation and doctors would have put an end to the riotous absurdity of the thayè tôpthi; but it has not by any means. In fact the house-beating goes on more vigorously in Rangoon and the larger district towns than elsewhere. This is

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

● 157

partly because cholera is more frequent there on account of the crowding together of the people, and the greater chances of the water being polluted; and partly because in small villages the people very often simply abandon the place, if there seems any danger of the malady getting a firm hold. Cholera is almost certainly fatal to any Burman attacked. The usual remedy adopted is a very astringent decoction of the rind of the mangosteen fruit, but it is seldom given soon enough to be of any use; and the Burman habit of trying to keep air away from the patient as much as possible, pretty nearly renders useless any effect the remedy might have had. All the windows and doors of the house are covered up, and a cloth is usually thrown over the sick man's head, so that he can hardly draw breath. Under these circumstances the man smitten with cholera invariably justifies the national belief that he is doomed. Any means, therefore, of keeping away the epidemic is eagerly seized upon, if it is only the embarkation of the whole population in unlimited gônnyinto playing, as was recently recommended as a favourable diversion to the public mind in Prome. No amount of reasoning or remonstrance is likely to put an end to the infliction of the thayè tôpthi. The Government officials are helpless against the superstition, and English police-inspectors have simply to stand by foolishly with their hands to their ears till the clatter and clamour dies down.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

791
754

religious towards the students of this sort of learning. Nevertheless, just as every Burman at some time in his life dabbles a little in alchemy, so the bedin sayās and hmaw sayās, and the magicians, good and evil, obtain believers and clients.

757

As the sôns are supposed to afflict people with strange illnesses, the province of the wézas becomes very much mixed up with that of the professional doctors. The latter cannot complain, and the general public can see no reason why the one should not be as good a physician as the other, for doctors in Burma take no diploma, and are not required to give proofs of skill in the healing art to any one but themselves. Many of them therefore are the most arrant charlatans, giving medicines according to fancy and in unlimited quantities. On the principle of like to like, prescriptions mainly composed of cayenne, cloves, ginger, and the like, are made up for fever patients, while purgatives are rigidly withheld. If a patient says he is no better five minutes after he has swallowed a dose, something else is tried, and so on, till the wretched victim has a stomach loaded with drugs to the limit of the prescriber's pharmacopœia. These quacks are too often taken as the only representatives of Burmese medical skill, and it is denied that any one in the country has a right to the title of doctor at all. But it is certain that some have really useful and efficacious remedies for ordinary ailments, such as jungle fever, dysentery, and other frequently-met-with diseases, while it is admitted that they are particularly successful in the treatment of sores and ulcers. I knew of a case in Rangoon where varicose ulcers, which had resisted the efforts of the best English doctors in Rangoon and Calcutta, yielded to the simples of a Burmese sethama. He used earth-oil with an infusion of some seed or bark, and speedily effected a cure. The Burmese *materia medica* consists of barks, leaves, flowers, seeds, roots, and a few simple minerals, of which they have an empirical knowledge. They especially deal in pills and powders, which they carry about with them in little phials of bamboo. These little cylinders are usually gilt and painted bright red, and are always strongly perfumed. It does not so much matter about the materials as at what time of the moon and under what constellations the ingredients are gathered. Whoever reaches a place within three days

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

●757 of the falling of a thunderbolt and finds meteoric stones, has sufficient to set him up as a doctor at once. The scrapings of the stone, among other things, are the best possible ophthalmic medicine. Liquids are very seldom used. There are, however, two schools—the datsayās, or dietists, who trust solely to regulating the patient's food according to the derangement of the elements, which is supposed to cause his disease, and eschew drugs; and the beindawsayās, who rely upon the exhibition of medicines. These last, the druggists, are far more numerous than the dietists. It is a great deal more easy to get a reputation with potent drugs than with a simple regulation of the diet, and accordingly an upstart doctor is always a druggist. The best advisers are those who combine the two systems, but such sensible practitioners are unfortunately few and far between.

822 826 753 Both assert that the human body is composed of four dat, or elements. These are—patawi daht, earth; apaw dat, water; tezaw dat, fire; wayaw dat, air. Akatha, or ether, is sometimes added to these, but the doctors mostly disregard it. Earth constitutes the flesh, bones, hair, intestines, and the like members of a man. Water constitutes the fat, blood, bile, spittle, mucus, etc. Eating, drinking, chewing, and licking come from the fire element. Air produces the six kinds of winds. Any derangement of the equilibrium of these elements makes a man ill, and it is important to know the precise time of a man's birth in order to know in what proportion the dat should be present.

753 Therefore in the case of illness an experienced doctor almost always examines a man's birth certificate before he looks at the sick man himself. Besides the derangement of the elements, diseases may be caused by kan, the influence of the sum of good and bad actions a man has done in past existences. If a man is ill of kan, nothing will cure him but the preponderance of good in his past lives. Again, a man may fall sick through derangement of his seit, or mind; through the influence of the seasons, utu; or, lastly, through food, ahāya. These causes, being laid down as the basis of the diagnosis, naturally do not always lead to the best results in the case of affections which are in any way out of the common run. Even in perfectly evident illnesses, however,

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

753

such as low fever, two persons in the same house afflicted in the same degree with the same ailment, are treated differently, simply because they were born under the influence of different planets, which have a special control over the effects of utu and ahāya, or over the respective relations of fire and water.

757

The dietists are often particularly absurd in their regulation of the diet from the horoscope. Having ascertained the day on which the patient was born, they will forbid him to eat articles of food whose names commence with any of the letters assigned to that particular day, most especially those which have the same initial letter as the sick man has himself. Thus a man born on Sunday will have to eschew eggs (u), cocoanuts (ôn thi), and other edibles whose name commences with a vowel. One whose birthday is Thursday must give up pumpkins (payôn thi), mangosteens, and gourds (buthi), while a Monday's child must refrain from seasoning his curry with ginger (kyinsein) or garlic (kyetthôn byu), and so on through all the other days. It is worthy of note, however, that those born on a Saturday are never forbidden to eat their rice (tamin), nor those on Friday their curry (hin). An attempt to ostracise the staff of life, as curry and rice is to all Orientals, would only result in bad treatment to the too pedantic and precisely logical practitioner. Such affections are called "Monday's sickness," "Tuesday's sickness," and so on. (Taninla, Inga kan kaitthi.)

These vagaries of the dietists are, however, far from universal, and emanate mostly from the manifest quacks of the profession, just as newly-set-up druggists will imagine specially curative properties in every strange and new leaf, or seed, or mineral they come across, and manufacture such extraordinary compounds as the green powder nostrum, which was exhibited to an astonished English M.D. with the information that it contained one hundred and sixty different ingredients and was infallible in its results. No doubt it was.

There is no denying that the excitability and impatience of the people react on the proceedings of the Burmese doctors. Whenever a man falls sick he gets into a feverish state of alarm about himself, and probably sends off for

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

●757

several doctors at once. The first one that comes prescribes, say for the liver. If the sick man does not feel better within a quarter of an hour at the outside, the physician is paid his fee of a few annas, sixpence say, and dismissed, and another is called in. Possibly he decides that the constituent of the disturbing element is the blood—the element of water, and not that of earth—and gives a dose accordingly. Should this not be speedily effective, he too gets his sixpence and his *congé*. And so on, as long as the means of the patient or the supply of doctors holds out. One consequence of this system is, that the richer a man is, and the more doctors there are in the neighbourhood, the greater is the probability that he will die; another equally unsatisfactory result is that the doctors, to maintain a reputation and ensure clients, are obliged to make their medicines as griping in character, as unpleasant in smell, and as nasty to taste as possible. In the larger towns many of the better-class Burmans resort now to English doctors or apothecaries. In many villages still, however, and in old-fashioned families, the patient is usually killed off by the variety of drugs given him by different doctors.

But in small towns and country villages the physicians are few, and when the se sayā cannot cure the sick man, he declares that he is possessed by an evil spirit or under a sôn's spell, and calls in the assistance of a witch doctor, a wéza of any one of the different classes, by preference, of course, an in wéza. Then there is a fresh consultation over the birth horoscope, an examination of the charms there may be on the sick man's body, a muttering of prayers and incantations, and finally the bedin sayā agrees that the man is bewitched. Thereupon he ties a rope round the patient's neck, and after chanting a formula with occasional jerks on the line, asks the demon in the victim what he has come for. If any answer is given and an object mentioned, this is taken to be the thing required, and it is placed outside the house in the road and left there all night. It will be gone by that time if it is worth taking (by men or nats). If the evil spirit does not then go out of the man, or if the tugging at the rope brings forth no answer, stronger measures are resorted to. He is soundly beaten with a stout bamboo, pins

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

757 ●

are stuck into him, red pepper is forced into his eyes, and the louder he shrieks and groans the better pleased are his friends and relations, for it is the witch, or the natso, that is suffering, and not the sick man at all. If this treatment does not kill or cure him, a final effort is made. A middle-aged woman, sometimes a member of the family, dresses herself up in a fantastic way, and assumes the name of "wife of the evil spirit." A shed is erected for the occasion just outside the house. Music is brought, and the woman begins to dance, slowly at first, and then gradually more and more furiously, until at length she works herself into a regular frenzy or ecstasy. Then it is supposed that the demon has passed out of the sick man into her, and that whatever answers she now gives to questions are the utterances of the demon. Consequently, whatever she directs is implicitly carried out. The instructions usually resolve themselves into offerings to be placed outside for the evil spirit at nightfall. If this fails, then the witch doctors and medicine doctors unite in declaring that the nat is too strong for them, and abandon their patient. Occasionally, if he is of a very strong constitution, he revives after that. Such performances are limited to remote jungle places nowadays. Thus, however, the provinces of the physician and the necromancer run into one another, and it is difficult to say where science ends and magic begins.

[562]

Shampooing is almost always employed in every disease, in addition to the prescriptions of the doctor; and here, at any rate, we have real skill. The shampooers are almost always women, though most men know a little about it too. A professional has a most wonderful knowledge of all the tendons and muscles in the human body, and follows them up with a light pressure of the fingers that affords a relief in the case of rheumatism and stiffness from exhaustion, which is simply incredible to all but those who have experienced it.

789
831

In addition to their other work, the hmaw sayās are very much resorted to for love philtres and potions by both sexes. They have always an answer pat if the prescription fails: it is due to the opposition of the eingsaung nat, the guardian spirit of the house; or the applicant has made a mistake as to the date of birth of the object of his affection

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

Knowledge of this latter particular is imperative, and an error of an hour or two makes all the difference in the composition of the potion.

It ought to be unsatisfactory to an intelligent Burman's feelings to think that the man who prescribes for him in a dangerous illness is possibly at the same time mixing cunning draughts for a love-sick maid, or is manufacturing an image of a girl with magical charms and drugs which shall drive the original mad and soothe the vengeful wrath of the rejected suitor. Perhaps it is on this account that a Rangoon Burman, if he falls ill out in the district anywhere, hurries back to town as fast as he can. If he cannot do that, the best thing is to call in a wéza in preference to an unknown doctor; for while the former will probably confine himself to incantations at first, the dietist will irritate all the gastric juices in your body by prescribing some new variety of food, and banning everything you have been accustomed to; while the druggist will cram you to the throat with cathartics and anthelmintics, with arsenic, fungi from bamboo roots, green vitriol, decoctions of lemon grass, borax, croton seeds, and vegetable soot.

The father of Burmese medical science was the celebrated physician Zewaka, who once cured a colic which afflicted the Lord Buddha Gautama, by simply giving him three flowers to smell. Upon the petals were strewn some potent powders which restored perfect health in a few hours. To this good medico is to be ascribed the assertion that the diseases which afflict mankind are ninety-six in number. These may vary in their symptoms according to the thirty-five temperaments, the forty-five accidents, the sixteen dangers, and the four elements, but there are no more than ninety-six wedana for all that. Accordingly, a very common beginning to a formal Burmese letter is to say that by his correspondent's good wishes the writer has been preserved from the ninety-six andayè; the thirty-two kan-chammā, or pieces of bad luck; the twenty-five baya, dangers from assassins, wild beasts, and the like; and finally from aneitta bala, evils of all kinds, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness: his friend's regard has kept all these things far from him, may the writer's good will be not less efficacious. Therefore it is

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

825 baby curled up together in a corner with the boa, making one another mutually cosy.

● [757] The gall-bladder and fat of the sabba-gyi are much prized for medicinal purposes, the fat especially being esteemed as a sovereign remedy for rheumatism and strains.

Of the poisonous snakes the most dreaded is the ngan, or u-gwet, the "spotted forehead." This creature, the hamadryad or ophiophagus, is, as his name imports, a cannibal, and lives on his neighbour snakes. Specimens as long as nine feet from nose to tail have been killed near Rangoon, and in the forests which are his proper home he sometimes grows to fourteen or fifteen feet. Unlike all other reptiles, the ngan does not get out of the way of a man approaching his haunts, but attacks him immediately. He is worse than the walrus that roused the indignation of the French poet.

Bees are kept in a good many places in the country, but it is necessary to be very careful where you put the hives. It is a most ill-omened circumstance if wild bees make a nest under the house, or if bees of any kind fly under the floor. On the other hand, a hive on the house-top is very lucky. Honey is in great request to present to the pôngyis at various feasts, and especially for the embalming of the [764] body of a dead brother of the Robe. After the cremation the honey is sold in the bazaar. It is not eaten by Englishmen in Burma. "Tapping the governor" does not commend itself to everybody. The hill tribes in the Shan States keep bees in hives made of blocks of wood.

757 Rhinoceros horns are in as great favour with the Burmans as with Chinese medical men. Shavings of the horn are considered an invaluable cure for epilepsy, and also guard against poisons of all kinds. There are two distinct species found in the eastern forests—the single and the double-horned.

315 187 Near Yenangyaung, in the petroleum district, when a new oil-well is wanted, the workmen place a marble image of an elephant on a smooth, flat stone, and surround it with gifts of all kinds, and then sit down to watch. If the elephant itself moves it indicates the direction in which borings are to be made; if not, the offering on which its shadow first falls as the sun sinks down, is marked, and a bedin sayā consulted.

HEALTH
Disorders.

753
•757

U Myaing and Ma Aye Myaing were each approached individually by Ko Sein Tu (U Myaing) with Ko Mya Tu and Ma Khin Hmway (Ma Aye Myaing), for a history of the disorders of their family. This data is presented below directly as it has been received from the informants. The disorder is identified by its Burmese name and presented English name, along with a description and period and place of affliction. This is followed by an account of the treatment.

Small-pox; KYAUK. U Myaing informs us that his two elder daughters had the small pox in 1942. Both were stricken at the same time, and recovered after 15 days. His two younger daughters were vaccinated. In describing this disorder, U Myaing says:-

> "At first the person is stricken with fever. At the end of the third day, small pustules appear on the body. When these ripen they are pricked and burst. Some Burmese practioners come and collect this pus for use as vaccine. Two or three days after GWAY DAUNG root, guava fruit and saffron are mixed and applied the pustules subside and the skin falls off. When the pustules started coming out, they were dark coloured, but when the patient is cured, the skin in those places becomes red. The small pox which the children had was not very severe. The whole course of treatment is carried out with Burmese medicines and by Burmese practioners. Soup of PE-LUN leaves is given to the patient. All sour and sweet foods are avoided when the rashes appear. When the pustules burst, guava fruit, saffron and Gway Daung root are made into a cream by rubbing on the rough surface of a KYAUK PYIN stone slab. The sores heal. The patient then has to bathe for three days in water which has boiled together with leaves of the NEEM tree. No charge was made for the medicines, and no expenses were incurred other than Practioner's fee of Rs. 5/-."

Malaria; HNGET HPYA (bird fever). U Myaing was stricken with malaria during 1942 for about 8 months. According to his description, in malaria, the patient goes down with high fever. The temperature rises and he begins to feel very warm. Then all at once he begins to feel very warm. Then all at once he begins to feel cold, and then colder and colder and starts shivering. In this condition three or four people are needed to hold him down. About four or five hours after feeling very cold he begins to grow hot again and his temperature falls when enough sweat has left the patients body. The next day, at the same time the temperature rises again. This sickness has to be cured with quinine. The Burmese cure for malaria seems to be mainly through dieting. Sour foods were eschewed, Neem leaves were eaten, and also NGA YAN fish was cooked with oil and eaten. The total expenditure for the cure amounted to Rs. 140/- or Rs. 150/- - if time lost for work is also included, Rs. 400/-.

Chicken pox; PE THI BAR: Every one in the family has had chicken pox at some time or the other. These were all in Pantanaw and lasted for about one month each. In this affliction the skin reddens, pus accumulates, and sores break out. These come out like the small pox and last for about a month. There is no internal suffering. Burmese practioners make the patient bathe frequently in cream made of guava fruit and saffron is applied.

753
757.

Measles: MET THET (Pig dropping): This is another disorder that has visited every member of the family at one time or another. This was in Pantanaw and lasted for about a month each. In measles, according to U Myaing, the skins reddens and pustules appear. These last for about 45 days and disappear when ashes of burnt pig dropping are administered in water to the patient. Plum Jam (Zee Yo) is also made and given to the patient to eat. Costs for ingredients of cure cost Rs. 14/- or Rs. 15/-.

Dysentery: WUN KAIK: U Myaing informs us that he had dysentery once at the age of thirty. It was a mild attack, lasting for about four or five days, and involving no mucus and no blood. It was cured by eating garlic and jaggery fried in oil, costing Rs. 4/- or Rs. 5/- to make. This was in Pantanaw.

Urticaria: GYAIK THO: U Myaing and his two elder daughters have had urticaria; U Myaing when at the age of 24 and his daughters about 5 years ago. In Urticaria, U Myaing says, itchy swellings develop all over the body, which subside and are cured within two days if the right medicines are applied. Treatment is either through taking ashes of burnt IN leaves administered in water, or by gently pounding the patient seven times with a pounder used for husking rice, the patient holding his breath the while. This treatment cost nothing.

Abscess: THET TANT: U Myaing has been affected by THET TANT once in his life, about four years ago and for a period of 18 days. In this disorder, a painful swelling develops on the back of the shoulder. There is no open sore. The patient begins to cough. When he begins to cough the Burmese practioner is called in. He uses his own medicine of which all U Myaing saw was a piece of garlic. With this he makes movements of dragging the swelling from the shoulder to the thumb, seven times in all. Then he tells the patient that within eight hours (in U Myaing's case from 12 o'clock to 8 o'clock) the swelling will have removed to the thumb. Within eight hours the pain is no longer located on the shoulder, and the swelling now appears on the thumb. This is now allowed to ripen and the accumulated pus is cleaned out. Antiseptic NPAN YE is used on the sore. The practioner charges Rs. 10/- as fees, and supplies his own medicine without further charge. This was in Pantanaw when U Myaing was a patient. The following account of the treatment of this disorder by U Myaing himself is given below,

> "About the disease THET TANT. I do not know how to recite the incantations used in the cure. In this disease a hot, painful and hard swelling appears. The other people came to call me (when a person in the refugee camp was afflicted with a similar ailment) because they thought it was THET TANT. As I had THET TANT once in my life I happen to know the cure for it. I managed to bring down swelling from the shoulder to the thumb. Within two or three hours of treatment the painful swelling from the shoulder to the thumb. Within two or three hours of treatment the painful swelling in the shoulder subsided and the thumb began to ache. The next morning, when the bandage was removed from the thumb pus was found to have accumulated there. When the pustule burst, it was treated as an ordinary open sore. In this disease, a swelling on the shoulder can be moved to the thumb and on the lower trunk or lower extremities to the big toe. The swelling is hard and elongated, and if not recognised and treated early starts to spread. This swelling never appears on the head or face. In the refugee camp there is one person by the name of Ma Saw Hla who had this disease during childhood, when she was about three years old. It was treated too late, and as a result she now walks with a limp."

U Myaing at this juncture sent for Ma Saw Hla and made her walk up and down in front of us to let us see her limping gait. He also made her give some information on her case. Ma Saw Hla said:

> "I went down with this disease. A young practioner from Tower came and tried [illegible] but only made it [illegible]

753
757

to go to the hospital (Pantanaw). When we met a Karen friend, he smeared some saffron onto the affected part, and recited something and at once two long lines appeared and it became apparent that the disease was THET TANT. (THET TANT, it is said is of two kinds, male and female, and this person had both. The difference between the two kinds seem to lie in the size of the swellings, the male being larger and more virulent.) The docter in the hospital had to operate on me. He told my parents that if I did not undergo any operation I would surely die, and even if it was successful it would affect a nerve and I would be left with a limp all my life. My parents had him operate and I was cured, but I've had this limp ever since. It was three months from inception before we knew that it was THET TANT."

[755]

When U Myaing cured his patient in Pantanaw, he lighted three or four candles and an incense burner; he recited prayers and the 5 Silas. At the head of the bed he placed the bowl containing water scented with Kalamet cream, Taung-Dan-Gyi cream and perfumes. Then U Myaing took this and began to sprinkle the water about the room, wishing aloud for the patient's recovery. Then he took seven single buds of garlic, weighing about 5 ticals and ground them together, and bandaged them around the thumb. U Myaing continues his account:

"I don't know the recitations for this desease. But what they do is to mix lime and saffron in water and smear it it on the affected part. Some people drink this. This is one method. Using garlic is another method. When the part is smeared with this mixture, the disease comes to the surface. There are some people who have died because the sore burst inside the body. As regards the garlic cure, when I enquired carefully, it turned out that the stanzas recited had nothing to do with affecting the cure. It must have been due to the garlic, because I could cure another person without reciting the stanzas. There are three kinds of THET TANT: the three months kind, the six months kind and the three years kind. It seems as if there is an internal swelling and it rises to the surface and disappears rises again, and so on. When there is a swelling and it is very hot, then it can be diagnosed as THET TANT. When it is is treated, the patient collapses with fever for one night - the night when the swelling is moved to the thumb. The disease is not very rare. I have seen it five or six times. There have been cases like that of Ko Maung Thant in Pantanaw, where the patient has died of internal THET TANT without knowing the nature of his disease. Only when the person is about to die does the internal THET TANT come to the surface. The swelling is hot, but there are also some cases where it is not so.

"The patient who I treated a few days ago in camp is now better. There are various ways and means of treating this disease. Some do it with bananas. After I burst the pustule and squeese out the pus, I do not put any medicine on the sore. The reason why it cannot be treated on the shoulder is that there is no pus - only an inflamed swelling which is very painful. Some practioners who do not know how to move the swelling smear on the shoulder certain mixtures which are designed to bring out the pus to the surface, and they cure the sore on the shoulder itself.

"I did not take any fee for curing the young boy in Pantanaw. He was very poor and I asked them only to buy the garlic for themselves. This was about 6 years ago, and the patient was about 16 years of age. He was in such a bad condition shouting and yelling in pain, that the parents expected him to die, and were weeping. I reflected that whether my treatment proved efficacious or not, it could not make his condition any worse than it was, and so I

753
757

started treatment. The day I started treatment the swelling reached his thumb, and four or five days later it burst. The thumb was placed in antiseptic HPAN YE liquid and smeared with crude patroleum oil and ashes. The name of the boy was Maung Hla Yin of Pathne village. I do not know whether or not they called in practicners. No one came to call me either. I heard of his sickness and went over. He had been suffering for about twenty days before I started to treat him. Not being a practicner, I do not know how to cure other diseases. I know how to cure this disease because it happened to me once and I witnessed the treatment.

[755]

"Some practicners cure the disease in another way - through saffron and white lime. They also have a wooden DAH fashioned out of the wood from a tree which has been struck by lighting. With this DAH they strike at the swelling lightly after which they smear the mixture on. I have no knowledge of where these practicners learn their trade. Burmese cures must be cheap and efficacious. It seems to me that recitations etc. are made to enable the practicner to command a higher fee, since people can and have been cured without any recitations at all. I do not believe in their incantations."

Scabies: MEH (itch). During the Japanese regime, the youngest child had scabies when she was one year old. If the right medicine is given the cure takes only two or three months, and if not, as many years. These sores are moistened itchy skin sores which spread with great rapidity. The Burmese prescription for an ointment to cure scabies includes: sulphur, KYAUK KHA, HSE DAN and copper sulphate. Also THAMAT KHA root and KYAUK KHA are mixed together on a KYAUK PYIN stone slab to make a cream for application. The person affected has to bathe often. The medicine which really effected the cure, however, was M & B 693 (Mayer and Baker sulpha pills.) These cost U Myaing 8 annas for a dozen, and only 9 were necessary to cure the child. Before she was cured, her condition was so bad, and her sores so extensive that people were reluctant to carry the baby. They had to carry it swaddled in many clothes.

[435]

Ringworm: PWAY. U Myaing had ringworm once when he was eighteen years old. This happened in Pantanaw, and it took him just three days to cure it. The ringworm whorls were so extensive that U Myaing did not dare to go out and mix with other people. In treatment, U Myaing used a western lotion of which the only distinguishing mark that he remembers is that it was of a "Two snake brand". He followed the directions on the label, bathing the whorls with soap and applying the lotion with a feather. The bottle held about four ounces and cost him Rs. 1/4.

[435]

MWAY KYUT MAR (Hair-coming-off-sore): U Myaing had this affliction once in Pantanaw for a period of 15 days. When a hair falls out, the skin in that place reddens and pus accumulates on the leg. The Burmese treatment consists of smearing the affected part with ashes and water mixed together.

Sore eyes: KYET SI MAR (eye sore). Sore eyes have been had by everyone in the family at one time or another. In the last four of five years, each member of the family has been afflicted about once a year. The eye becomes red and inflamed and watery. Tamarind bark is made into a cream and applied. Tamarind leaves are pounded with salt and placed and bandaged on the forehead. The cost of treatment is negligible, since the cure involves the use of about only one anna's worth of salt and the tamarind is obtained free.

Disorders of the Nose: Cough and Cold. AH KHI KHI (cold-catch) NHAR KYE CHAUNG HNO (Mucous flooding-cough): All the members of the family get these disorders periodically, that is, about once or twice a year each. Treatment is by smearing balm (Tiger balm or others)

753 in the nose and by using it as an inhalant also. A bottle of balm
•757 costs between Rs. 1/4 or Rs. 1/8.

Sore in the Nose: _____. The youngest child had a sore in her nose during the month of October 1950. This was through falling on her nose. Pus accumulated, and the nose became inflamed. It lasted for two weeks and was cured through the application of nose drops given to the family by a medical student.

Toothache: THWA KAIK (tooth ache): U Myaing had a toothache once in his life when he was 33 years of age. This was due to a decayed tooth. He suffered off and on for a period of over two years, and obtained relief only when it became sufficiently weak for him to pull it out. U Myaing did not go to the dentist to have the tooth extracted, and therefore there was no cost. This is the only case of toothache in the family, and even Daw Aw Zar has a complete set of sound teeth.

Stomach-Ache: BAIK MAR (stomach pain): U Myaing informs us that all the members of the family have had stomach ache some time in their lives. This he attributed to "wind" in the stomach. No treatment was taken other than the eating of digestive salts or YET HNA (sodium chloride and crushed bark.)

Piles; DU LAR, LEIK GAUNG (Young man disorder - tortoise head (rectum)): U Myaing has had piles since he was thirty years of age. He still suffers from it, but it does not trouble him much. He has undergone no treatment to cure it, as, he says, "All men have this. It is only a matter of size."

[158] Fits: YET. U Myaing tells us that his youngest daughter is subject to fits. To be exact, she has had them twice in her life, once when about a year old, and once about 5 months ago - at the age of three years. This comes on when the child falls into an incontrollable rage, forgets to breathe, and her face becomes blue. In this condition, the child has to be quickly massaged, till it resumes breathing. The period of affliction is short and there is no cost of treatment.

Cuts and Wounds. All the members of the family have had cuts or wounds at some time or the other. On such occasions Burmese practioners come and recite certain incantations over the wound, with the ostensible object of making itheal. For sword cuts, onions and sessamum oil are applied externally. This heals the wound quickly. If the leg is pierced by an iron nail, salt is pressed into the wound. At the age of thirty-two, U Myaing cut his toe with a DAH and inflicted a severe wound on himself. He cured it with onion and seesamum oil. Ma Khin Saw was severely burnt in the leg by hot water when one year old. Betel leaves, sugar and Ngan Pyar Ye (fish paste water) were first applied to the burn, and later on crushed THE BUNT leaves mixed in water. There was no swelling at all. Daw Aw Zar, when at Kyaungon developed a huge boil on the leg through having to walk in grass without any slippers on. She had to suffer for two months from this. Treatment consisted in bathing the boil with Hpan-Ye antiseptic liquid, and application of crushed KAZUN and gourd leaves mixed in water. The hospital also gave external medicines, but U Myaing does not know what medicine it was. It was healed after 2 months of treatment.

U Myaing was bitten twice by dogs. In such cases, treatment is by taking a silver THIN-GHA (tincture of iodine) rubbing charcoal onto its surface, and then pressing it seven times onto the wound while the person who is bitten holds his breath. There is a stanza which is usually recited on such occasions, but U Myaing does not happen to know it. When U Myaing himself was bitten, other people came and did the same service for him, and neither did they recite any stanza. However, his wound did not even fester.

There is also a stanza which is used to staunch the flow of blood. U Myaing believes in the efficacy of this stanza because

753
757

he has seen it work before his very eyes. The flow of blood lessens and stops even while the stanza is being recited.

Mastitis: _____)i Ma Aye Myaing had mastitis on the right breast three months ago at the refugee camp. She felt feverish and had pain all over. On the third day, an English lady, probably a welfare worker, gave her fomentation for three days but it had no effect. On the next day, when an Indian doctor on volunteer service came to the camp, she consulted him. After careful examination he gave her a black ointment to apply to the affected area. She didnot know what ointment it was, but Ma Khin Hmway conjectures that it was Ethyl belladona. In addition to the ointment, he also gave her some white pills. These had to be taken orally twice at a time, three times a day for a period of ten days. After ten days of this combined treatment, Ma Aye Myaing's mastitis was completely cured.

Influenza: TOKE KWAY (crouched position). Ma Aye Myaing tells us that she has had two attacks of influenza in her life time. The first was two years ago, and the second occured last year during the month of TAZAUNG-MON.

_____ ANAR PA HSOT (Sore heart). U Myaing once had an attack of Anar-pa-hsot when he was 35 years of age. This happened in Pantanaw, and was of 15 days duration. In this affliction, a swelling arises, red in colour, which rapidly accumulates pus. When this pustule bursts, new pustules rise at the base of the old swelling. If no medicines are taken, then the sore begins to spread but if treated with the right medicine the sore heals after the first pustule. The Burmese treatment for this disorder is as follows: Dried Hpan-Ga fruit is ground together with the mud from the mud-wasp's burrow, and placed on the sore. This stops the progress of infection within 5 days and effects the cure within another four or five days. The Hpan-Ga fruit costs about two or three annas, and that is about the total expenditure needed. However, if one does not know the cure, and has to consult a practioner, he will charge any amount between Rs. 10/- and Rs. 15/-. [435]

_____ HNYIN. Hnyin is a skin disease which brings out unsightly white patches on the skin. If not treated properly these tend to spread rapidly all over the body. The white patches are irritable and itchy, and very contagious. U Myaing has Hnyin patches on his body at present and has had them for the last three years. No medicines have been taken, because he regards it as a minor affliction.

The data on medicine and health was collected in the company and [124] with the assistance of a medical student Ko Mya Tu who is at present studying in the Final Year M.B.B.S. class in the Rangoon University Medical College, preparatory to taking his final examinations. Ko Mya Tu proved of great help in interrogation and interpretation of data collected, and in diagnosing the nature of the various disorders from such symptoms and treatments as were remembered by the members of U Myaing's family. This technique elicited the information that there has been no case of Venereal Disease, Mental Disorder, Elephantiasis, Night-Blindness, Goiter, Plague, Mumps, Enteric, Beri-beri, Hernia, Cholera, Consumption and Disorders of the Ear in U Myaing's family.

886
757

Menopause: MEE YAT THWAY SONE (Woman Disorder-Blood End). Daw Aw Zar reached her climacteric at the age of 50. She did not suffer from menopause symtoms, as she had taken the following preventative measures: she ha. eaten boiled duck eggs three at a time, and very frequently. Kyauk-Hpayon fruit jam was eaten all the time (since 25 ticals of jam can be offered on the altar and can then be eaten to last for 10 days. Phalaung-taung-hmwe root is thinly sliced, mixed with 25 ticals of palm jaggery, 6 pice worth of the 5 kinds of Hsa-mon seeds, and some salt, brewed together and taken. Also, each about two fingers small, were boiled and eaten with rice. Daw Aw Zar ate all these things until the age of 60.

757

Smallpox: (Preventatives). The Burmese preventative measure for smallpox consists in rubbing the whole body in horse sweat and drinking mare's milk. The liver of the python is mixed with water and taken internally. Python flesh is also eaten and python skin is burnt and the ash mixed with jaggery (palm sugar) and made into pills to be taken orally. This is quite effective, and even if smallpox does come on later, it only does so in a mild form, as in the case of two of U Myaing's children who had only about 15 pustules each. U Myaing applied the preventatives. He tells us that practioners can shift the location of pustules. A pustule about to appear on the eyes of a child can be shifted elsewhere by using the tongue of the mother.

Medical injections-Vaccination and Cholera. Back in Pantanaw the English vaccinator came around only once in about three years, and consequently the children have been vaccinated only once in their lives. This, however is a service which is rendered free of charge. The youngest child has been vaccinated once here. The same remarks hold true for cholera injections also, except that every one in the family including the adults, has had only one inoculation each in their whole lives.

515
2%

Cleanliness. For bathing, U Myaing's family uses the hydrant in the camp twice a day. The soap which is used for washing clothes is also used on the body. In Pantanaw the river was used twice a day, and they had special soap for the body. In the camp clothes are washed every day because of their small number. In one month, the family uses up thirty cakes of soap each worth 2 annas, for bathing and washing. Teeth are cared for by cleaning them every morning with either salt or charcoal. This is true both of Pantanaw and refugee camp. It involves no special cost. In Pantanaw, the water used was water from the stream. This water was very clear, but it was also filtered before being used. In the refugee camp here the water is very clear and is used as it comes from the hydrant

757

Warts: KATO. The cure for warts is to kill the mother wart by prodding it with some sharp instrument or pinching it away slowly.

753
775

An important factor in the health of the family has been the supernatural. Daw Aw Zar was completely serious in informing us that the reason she was in good health at 72 years of age was that she had been good in a previous existence. This idea is apparently tied to the concept of merit acquisition in which the deeds of the present existence add to or subtract from the well being of the future existence. U Myaing states it in this manner:

"The good in this life is because of the meritorious acts in the previous existence."

Analysis

751
164
744

The main active preventative measures are those of cleaning the body and the clothes. The Burmese seem to be fastidious in this regard. The boiling of water and food is a similar measure. However, there does not seem to be much concern with communal sanitary measures as practical in western countries. It is difficult to see a real difference in the standard of preventative measures in Camp as opposed to Pathwe. In effect, the individual standards are maintained and the communal ones remain as negative as previously.

The medical record as given by the family, though open to question as to accuracy in coming from laymen, does indicate a high incident of communicable diseases and apparent lack of deficiency disorders. The low incident of dysentery is surprising, but may not be accepted without question. The high incident of piles is interesting in suggesting a cultural disorder perhaps organically tied to the constant squat position. There appeared to be a greater incident of eyesores, chils, and skin diseases in the refugee camp - perhaps as a result of greater crowding in the the urban situation. Certainly the dust of Rangoon is an active hazard in this regard.

177
•757

Most of the family's medical care has been that of Burmese practitioners. Only 3 cases was western medicine used, and in two of these Burmese remedies were also used. Dr. Sheppard, ECA medical advisor, and Ko Mya Tu interviewed U Myaing for the purpose of finding out his reactions to western medicine. His increased contact with modern medicine in Rangoon has had an effect on his thought as seen in the interview below:

> U Myaing said: "In our practical experience we find that western medicine is more efficacious (than native Burmese medicines). I remember the woman whom you (Ko Mya Tu) came and gave injections to. She recovered at once and is now hale and hearty - the woman who lives in the shed near our place (in the refugee camp). She was stricken with dysentery. She was suffering from 11 o'clock at night till morning, when an ambulance was summoned by telephone to take her to the hospital. She was given injections and by noon she was feeling very much better. Burmese doctors take much longer. Some of them mix in western medicines with their own. If we were given the choice we would prefer western medicine because it takes effect quicker..I have seen one case of Burmese medicine succeeding where western medicine failed. This was a case of urinary trouble."

Basic Burmese Concepts of Health and Sickness.

753
181
759

The Burmese regard health as the best of all earthly blessings. Although Buddha referred to the living body as a decaying corpse, which it was folly to feed, he recognised the necessity for bodily health in order to carry out the all-important mental activities connected with the Buddhist religion. It is then essential for each person to be as physically and mentally sound as he is able. The forces governing health and sickness are both supernatural and natural each with its own set of medical specialists. The specialists are called for only when the case is far advanced there being an extensive lore of home precautions and curative practices. In general, disorders caused by nats and ghosts (supernatural) or magic are recognised by their sudden, catastrophic or otherwise unusual nature, and are both instigated and cured by magical means. The natural disorders are caused by weaknesses in the constitution of the patient, foreign bodies, dangerous foods and such-like means, and are cured through knowledge of medical principles. The germ concept of disease is completely lacking, although when foreign matter is seen, as mosquito larvae in water, it is frequently regarded as unhealthy. The western idea of omnipresent harmful bacteria is regarded as fantastic in being contrary to observation - "our ancestors have lived for countless generations in these surroundings which you regard as dangerous", they will say. There are some 80 different kinds of PO NYOSHA or harmful ingredients that can infect the body. These range from undesirable ingredients in food to mystical influences that rise in the teeth to cause tooth-ache. The cleanliness of the Burmese, as seen in their several daily baths and emphasis on clean clothes, is not out of regard for "hygenic" reasons, but rather for social reasons. One must look his best in public so as not to give offense, to the eye or nose. The sick person is never washed since cold water would have the effect of driving the fever-heat inward to a fatal degree. The data for resumption of bathing for the convalescent is carefully considered; mistakes can result in relapse and death. Cool breezes must be avoided by the sick person for similar reasons. The house doors closed during the day invariably mean sickness within.

[754]

575
576
757

753 The concept of KARMA (fate) is important only in determining
777 the general well-being of the individual, as seen in Daw Aw Zar's
262 belief that her general good health was due to a morally-lived previous existence. "It is like a shadow". Some specific situations like being born blind is attributed to one's KARMA - in this case the person had been a notorious fighter of cocks in the previous existence; cocks being frequently blinded in the fights.

Each person is regarded as subject to some special disorder or weakness such as being especially subject to colds or headaches, or stomach troubles. Collectively these are referred to as "age-group" weaknesses. (MIYAT - girls' weakness; DULAH - boys' weaknesses.) But this is due to childhood illnesses and neglect of early troubles rather than KARMA. Persons with the weaknesses noted above avoid cucumbers (a "cold" vegetable), or hot foods including liquor (these cause greater heat to rise to the head), or green or raw vegetables (hard to digest). The choice of the correct diet to suit one's particular condition is important.

751 Bodily exercise is a prime consideration for health. Calli-
526 sthenics or sports for this purpose are unknown or unrecognised and by
461 " healthful exercise " is meant everyday work activities. Regular
•757 daily motion is regarded as necessary for health, and a purgative is
514 taken regularly once a month. The idea is to " clean out disease ". Purgatives are taken first in most sicknesses. This is followed by drinking preparations in hot water to induce perspiration along with woolen blankets. The colour of the urine is checked "daily" since a too yellow colour indicates an unhealthy condition. If so - one must drink additional quantities of water and coconut water. "Urine takes the place of perspiration in cold weather". Over-working and lack of sleep also lead to unhealthiness. The ideal
[93] sleep period is from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. with a nap thrown in from 12 to 2 after "breakfast".

158 Too much worrying SAY_T_UNG_YO_MOJEH (mind-beating-because-
753 body-crush) leads to sickness. This is a common problem for mothers who worry about their children's futures. It results in THEHJEH-PYEZEH (small black bitter (gall)-disorder) where the gall fluid is

561 removed. Old folks habitually like bitter foods - especially tea
262 leaves. Eating prepared foods left over night is strictly prohibited as a cause of illnesses. Curry must be eaten while it is hot. (There are no apparent reasons - just observation from eating spoilt [757] foods). Boiled rice and fried dry fish comprises the standard sick diet in addition to other foods especially prescribed for the care or 177 for giving vigour. It is interesting to note that English foods such 757 as tinned biscuits ("Golden Puff biscuits") or milk preparations 262 ("Hollicks") are preferred for the sick diet by those who can afford them. The "strong" tastes of these foods give strength to the sick person. Lately, western medicines have been recognized as powerful. U Myaing's experiences above show the means by which this idea is established. However, the Burmese doctor is relied on even by families of the administrative class in Rangoon.

759 When a case of sickness seems beyond response to normal treatments, and it has been diagnosed as of a natural cause, the SAY SAYA (medicine-master) is called in. "Foot-hire" at a stiff rate of Rs.5/- for the first visit and 2 or 3 rupees for succeeding visits is paid for this service. "Say-saya, we place the case in your hands" is entoned, to which the doctor replies "If our faith coincides (i.e. patients and doctors) then we will be successful - otherwise we cannot go against Karma". The doctor notes the symptoms, feels forehead for fever, inquires of colour of urine and the course of the disorder. [198] He then chants in verse the diagnosis as "eyes yellow, motion irregular, forehead moist - (giving nature of sickness)". The treatment also follows in verse form as a rigid formula prescribing medicines and diet. The doctor is a specialist in one or more types of medicine which he has concocted such as "blood purifying medicine", "fever medicine", "purgative medicine", and he will have [755] been called in because of this speciality. Charmed water is frequently given. Here verse formula is said over a cup of water to give it power.

SAY SAYA are trained when young men as apprentices to older doctors. The training includes memorizing many books giving diagnosis and formulas for curing as well as learning the master's arts.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

Dealers, with the exception of 1164
[463
554]
759
757.

278. THE LORD OF HELL RECEIVES HIS STEWARD'S ACCOUNT OF THE PAINS INFLICTED ON SINNERS (p. 121).

the dealer in medicine, who is at the same time the physician, do not receive the title *sayá*—teacher, doctor—which is accorded to every master workman. The physician (*sithama sayá*) makes no charge for his advice, but only for his medicines. There is, however, a school of doctors who oppose the use of drugs, and rely upon the regulation of diet and on shampooing; they make their charge for the latter operation. Ague (intermittent fever, *pyá-na*) is the commonest complaint in Burma, which no one escapes. The remittent form of malarial fever is also common. Attacks may be light and pass away of themselves, or they may be severe and protracted. Malaria is the chief cause of mortality. The common treatment is to encourage sweating. Aperients are not resorted to if it can be helped, as the Burmese drugs are drastic. In severe cases the head is shaved. Quinine was at one time making its way in the bazárs; but soon adulteration began to be practised, and it lost repute. The scheme of selling the Government quinine at the post offices may be effectual in rehabilitating the medicine. Santonin worm-tablets likewise had a great reputation until adulteration began. Rheumatism is common in Burma. It is treated by shampooing (*a-hnlik*), which in this complaint is most efficacious. *A-hnlik* is a kneading of the muscles and nervous plexuses; massage, in the sense of rubbing, is not practised. The expert shampooers possess an empirical knowledge of the interdependences in the nervo-muscular system which is remarkable. An attack of lumbago, which would cripple one for days, is cured in half an hour. Vapour baths, over the water of hot springs, are also resorted to. Heart-burn and colic are common ailments.

277. BURMAN APOTHECARY.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

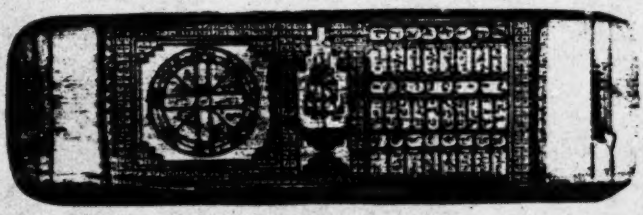
164
759
757

278. SHAMPOOING (A-HKEIK).

[177]

Dysentery is much less frequent in natives than in European residents. Consumption and pneumonia are rare, but coughs and bronchitis are common. Cancer is not unknown. Measles and chicken-pox follow a mild course. Scarlet fever does not occur, nor does typhus. It is uncertain whether typhoid fever existed in Burma or has been introduced; it is rare among the natives, but attacks Europeans in a bad form. Venereal diseases lurk in the towns. (For leprosy, see p. 41.) Diarrhœa and cholera recrudesce every hot season. There are no records of other pestilence. Small-pox rages in severe epidemics, but with greatly diminished incidence where vaccination has been accepted. Native practitioners were acquainted with inoculation. In introducing voluntary vaccination the British Government has met with great success. The introduction of this measure exemplifies how grotesque the arguments may be that prevail upon the people. The alleged motive of the government was too improbable; so wiseacres cast about for another. What more likely than a dream of the Queen of England—that a child existed in Burma who would overthrow her dominion! This child could not be known, but it would be reached and removed by the plan of poisoning the blood of the whole generation. It was many years before

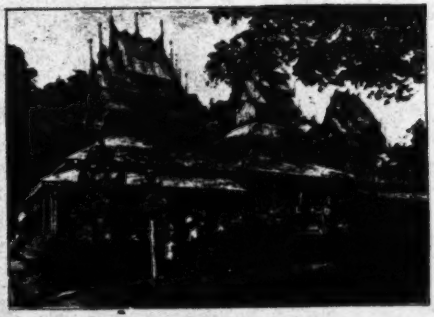
[787]



279. HOROSCOPE ON PALM-LEAF.

the myth was dispelled. In 1894, when small-pox was known to be approaching from Karenni, the Karén (nat-worshipping) village of Bilin-Mèwaing among others, consisting of sixty souls, submitted to vaccination. The lymph took in all but sixteen cases. Six months later small-pox reached the locality. Twelve

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4



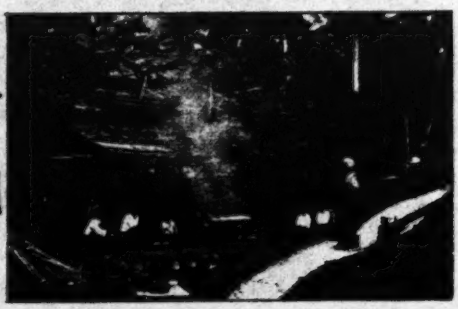
220. KOTHEMA YON (p. 191).

of the unsuccessfully vaccinated caught the disease, and ten of them died. None of the forty-four were attacked. These statistics could be multiplied. The medicine-dealers keep many of the crude commercial drugs, besides simples of their own collecting. Of the former, the principal are aloes, jalap, croton-seed, senna, bitter barks, catechu, opium, camphor, ginger, cardamom and other aromatics. The medicinal use of castor-oil is not known, though the plant is common. Spirits are now used medicinally. Many of the vegetable remedies are almost inert (see *The Burmese, what do they know of medicine?* by Dr. D. H. Cullimore). But there is one that deserves to be known, namely, the Shan remedy for tape-worm, *thsse*, which is both effectual and mild. Among the mineral drugs are mercury, calomel, sulphur, blue and green vitriols, alum, salammoniac, nitre. There is a whole category of supposititious remedies, tiger's gall, rhinoceros' blood, ant-eater's scales, and so forth; they are charred before being made up. Allied to this class of remedies is that of charms, the vendors of which (nat-wives—*nakkaddw*) trade on the superstition that disease is caused by demons. Every patient will be as particular to mention his star as to describe his complaint. He will be advised to avoid certain classes of remedies on certain days. The "Sunday son" must not purge on Friday, and so on. In times of epidemic and panic, *thibbuzedi* are erected at every house, as they likewise are in cases of sickness (No. 431). They are merely of sand, held together with circles of bast. Sometimes they are erected to avert calamity declared to be impending in a *skwepe-khwdaw*, a message on gold foil dropped from heaven by a *Thadyd* (p. 186). Images are dedicated

221. CHILDREN'S BAZAR (p. 191).

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

757
278
755
[782]



282. PREPARING TAWTHALIN OFFERINGS (p. 186).

at the temples in the same spirit. *Thèbôn-zedi* are erected on the day of a sick person's planet, and decorated with flags according to the years of age. Here Buddhism, which knows of no vicarious merit (or demerit), is tainted by a survival of animism (p. 188). The merit of the act is intended to cancel the demerit of some troubled spirit which is seeking to possess the body of the sufferer. Offerings are likewise set apart for the troubled spirit in the forest, to divert him from the sick person. When an epidemic of cholera occurs, the whole village sets up a din at sunset with bamboo sticks, to frighten the demons away. But many minds are averse to such superstitions, and they seek for natural explanations. They ascribe disease to states of the blood, to "heats" and "vapours." The cooling qualities of nitre are extolled for the one, and the cordial effects of spice for the other. Dietetic questions interest everybody, and everyone has his or her pet nostrum. Very little operative surgery is attempted as compared with India and China—merely the opening of abscesses and setting of bones. Hare-lip and cleft palate, and the cognate deformities, appear to be frequent. The dressings applied to wounds and sores are chiefly turmeric, slaked lime, *nîm*-leaves.

758
752

Successful lithotomies and other major operations, and the boon of chloroform, have spread the fame of western surgery in a vastly wider circle than it can reach itself. The sick are tenderly nursed by the Burmans, and never abandoned in panic fear as happens in epidemics among the hill-tribes. There are few greater sources of religious merit than ministering to the sick. During the puerperium, the Burman custom is to main-

[482]

844

283. BURMAN CARRIER.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

the monastery. It is a day of excited celebration. Recalling the Great Renunciation, when Gautama left the royal court in his quest for truth, the boy, attired in princely robes, is feasted by his family and friends until the moment when he casts his finery aside to don the yellow robe of the Order.[21]

Girls experience a similar ceremonial initiation, when (to the accompaniment of vigorous music) their ears are pierced to take the ear-rings which are the sign of womanhood. They cannot attend the monastic schools with the boys, but other means are found for their education, and they certainly do not lag behind their brothers in intelligence, character or Buddhist zeal. Mrs Hla Oung recounts the story of a little maid taken to the monastery to be reminded of the five precepts, after some childish misdemeanour. (The monk was benign. "There was the faintest suspicion of a smile on his calm face, to show, I suppose, that her backsliding was not to be taken as a defection from the faith.") The 'charity of learning' seems, then, to be shared by girls as well as boys. The status, freedom and privileges of Burmese women have already been remarked and Mrs Hla Oung affirms vigorously that "the life of the Burmese woman is bound up in her religion. Buddhism has formed the character of the Burmese woman.... There are few Burmese women, even in the villages, who are unable to read and write," and the Buddhist scriptures form the ground work of their studies.[22]

Not only are the monks numerous, but they are dispersed throughout the country. Every village has at least one monastery, and sometimes more. The educational influence of the Order has been, therefore, both organised and ubiquitous. In more recent times this influence has been challenged by new conditions. Government and mission schools have intervened, and the modern Burmese boy may only remain in the monastery as a novice for a brief, token period. But during the centuries which shaped the Burmese character and outlook, the monks as educators had no serious rivals.

Nor has their ministry to the community been confined to education. Herbs and potions from the monastery are held in high esteem, especially in Upper Burma.[23] The monastery also serves as alms-house and asylum.

[21] For a good description of this ceremony v. Ananda Metteya, quoted by G. Appleton, *Buddhism in Burma*, pp. 22–23.

[22] Ma M. Hla Oung, "The Women of Burma," *Buddhism*, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 61 (September, 1903, Rangoon); cf. a later series by Daw Mya Sein, "Kin Sein Hla," *Burma Today*, published by the Burma Government in India, 1944, in which the influence of the Monastery is not so strongly emphasised.

[23] "Theirs is faith cure rather than medicine," writes a Burmese correspondent, who cites cures from snake-bite, leprosy and hydrophobia.